



Kosher sushi for all

• By DEBBIE LAMPERT
eLuna.com

Udi Romanowsky is the Johnny Appleseed of sushi restaurants. At least four or five sushi restaurants owe their success to Udi and longtime business partner Yoav.

Some years ago, when he called to tell us that he was opening a new Asian restaurant in Tel Aviv, we ran. We got to Nini Hachi, on upper Ben Yehuda Street, the day it hung the kashrut certificate. If you forget the address, just think of the name. Nini Hachi is the number 228 in Japanese.

This is one of Udi's more spacious restaurants. Tables are comfortably distanced from one another on the entrance level, and there is more seating around the bar. Seating continues upstairs with many more tables and another sushi bar, perfect for private meetings or groups.

My husband, my most appreciative dining companion, loves the exotic dishes at Asian restaurants. The Chicken Gyoza starter (NIS 39), with five chicken-filled pastry fans, was his favorite. The dish is served with plain rice, but we discovered that it goes really nicely with the restaurant's sweet and sour Asian salad.

For his main course, my companion went with a big bowl of Ramen soup (NIS 38-43). There is also a soup based on coconut milk with mushrooms and chicken (NIS 41). Don't ask me names. I wrote them all down, and I cannot read what I wrote. I shy away from soup, but I love the tofu dishes at Udi restaurants. Let me recommend the Agadashi Tofu dish, which is cubed stir-fried tofu with a lovely mirin sauce.

On this visit we chose the veggie sushi, and enjoyed creative rolls with avocado and all the sushi vegetables. The presentation is half the story, and this sushi was beautifully presented on a glass tray.

The menu offers plenty of choices of meat and fish dishes. But if you are a vegetable fan, as I am, you will appreciate the expertise at this restaurant in preparing cooked vegetables. The Teppanyaki asparagus and mushroom (NIS 55) is just a platter of fresh cooked mushrooms and asparagus, perfectly cooked, leaving the vegetable crispy and delicious. The Asian sauce just hits the spot.

Ladies, no need to forgo sushi during pregnancy. Nini Hachi, together with the Israeli institute for food safety and quality, has developed pregnancy-safe, fish-free, sushi roles and nigiri. *B'sha'ah tova!* 5 stars from eLuna.com

The restaurant will be open on *Hol Hamoed* Passover (kitniyot).

The writer was a guest of the restaurant.

Nini Hachi

228 Ben-Yehuda Street, Tel Aviv

Open Sunday-Thursday, 12 noon till 12 midnight; Friday, noon till 4 p.m. Saturday, from half hour after Shabbat.

Kashrut: Tel Aviv Rabbinate

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